Mission in a Bottle
Exploring market expansion opportunities for Women in Wine

Final Presentation
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This project aims to help Women in Wine identify strategies for domestic and international expansion by assessing its wines’ position in the market.
Our Research Approach

- Interviewed industry professionals in order to:
  a. Learn about the nuances of the South African wine industry
  b. Discuss possible pathways for marketing and distribution improvement for Women in Wine
- Gained distributor and retailer input regarding marketability of the wine.
- Gathered consumer perceptions of wine in general and Women in Wine specifically.
South African Retailers

- **Mid-range grocery store**
  - National Wine Buyer
- **Woolworths**
  - Ivan Oertle, Former Leading Wine Buyer
- **Love Wine, Stellenbosch**
  - Owner
- **Cellar in the City, Cape Town**
  - Anton Groenewald, Owner
- **Winhuis, Stellenbosch**
  - Manager
- **Carolyn’s Fine Wines**
  - Carolyn Rillema, Owner
US Distributors and Retailers

- **Wine Vine**
  - Sang Chhoeuk, Retailer

- **OZ Wine Company**
  - Joey Hersh, Sales Representative

- **Heritage Link Brands**
  - Selena Cuffe, President and CEO

- **Independent Regional Distributor**
  - Roy Goldstein
Key Finding

Women in Wine was identified as an “artistic” mid-range wine in the US market.
Three Dominant Label Categories

Artistic
- layercake
- asplashofred
- lescaapridge
- reddress
- provenance
- cardinals
- sirencall
- sevensisters
- lafuga
- womeninwine

Modern
- phant
- fowremus
- splattertoad
- obikwa
talineckvines
- sebek
- loganweemal
- arrogantfrog
- bobs
- fatbastard
toadhollow
- southernright
- goatsinvillages
- goatsdoroom

Traditional
- thechocolateblock
- cyclus
- petit
- neilashmead
- incipio
- palladius
- indaba
- cherubino
- simonsig
- warwick
- excelsior
- tokara
- meerlust
- grootconstantia
- leleshwa
- ernieels
US Customer Perceptions of Label

Traditional

Modern

Artistic
US Consumer Data

Amount typically spent on wine

- Less than $10: 14%
- $10-15: 22.9%
- $15-25: 60.5%
- More than $25: 1.6%

How much extra are you willing to pay for Women in Wine’s mission?

- Not willing to pay more: 20.9%
- Up to $2 more per bottle: 27.2%
- $2-3 more per bottle: 38.6%
- More than $3 per bottle: 13.3%
Key Finding

Labeling design is important to effectively convey and position a brand.
“If we love your wine and it’s a good price but [has] terrible labeling, we’ll pass on it.”
—Joey Hersch, US wine distributor

“If you’ve got a really ‘wow’, impactful label, half the job is already done on the shelf because it just grabs the customer’s attention.”
—Ivan Oertle, former Wine Buyer of Woolworths
Descriptions of the Women in Wine label
“Wine is a handcrafted commodity—you’re dirtying your hands. So what we’re trying to communicate with a wine label is craftsmanship, and a handmade feel.”

Low-end wines are known as “concept brands,” while mid- to high-end wines are “personality” or “family” brands.
Seven Sisters and Brutus

Creating a new brand to enter the high-end market

Concept Brand
- Busy, colorful logo
- Low-to mid-range

Family Brand
- Simple crest
- High-end
Women in Wine
A concept brand

Computer generated logo and fonts
Dark background

Complex story, mission, and description

Women in Wine
south africa

CABERNET SAUVIGNON
Typical blackcurrant and plum flavours. This medium-bodied wine is well-balanced and shows undertones of cigar box flavours with a hint of mint and roasted nuts.

Women in Wine expresses the hearts desire from a group of South African women with a passion for quality wine and empowering women. Vineyard workers, together with women from the Cape, realized their dream when they established South Africa’s first ever producing company owned by a broad base of women.

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WINE OF SOUTH AFRICA
W.O. WESTERN CAPE
ALC 13.5% VOL 750ML

Drinking during pregnancy can be harmful to your unborn baby.
The mission of a wine brand generally encourages consumers to purchase.
US Consumer Responses to Mission

How much extra are you willing to pay to support a mission?

- Not willing to pay more
- Up to $2 more
- $2-3 more
- More than $3 more
SA Consumer Responses to Mission

Do you consider a mission/story when choosing to buy?

- Yes: 27.5%
- No: 72.5%
Out of 40 South African Consumers

Frequency motivated to buy wine because...

- It has a mission: 80
- It is produced by a women-run company: 60
- It is produced by a Black-run company: 40
Retailers and Industry Professionals Explain

“Wine is not synonymous with an Afrocentric brand.”
—Philip Bowes, VinPro, Manager of Transformation and Development

“Many of these Black owned brands ... are talking about the ethnic angle and they are missing all the customers that aren’t looking for that.”
—Ivan Oertle, former Wine Buyer of Woolworths
Thokozani and Ovation
Key Finding

Fairtrade certification is not a critical factor to South African retailers and consumers, however most care about ethical production.
South African Consumer Responses

Do you know what Fairtrade is?
- No: 12.1%
- Yes: 87.9%

More likely to buy an ethically produced wine?
- No: 66.7%
- Yes: 33.3%
US Consumer Responses

Do high ethical standards make you more likely to buy?

- Yes: 52.5%
- No: 47.5%
Key Finding

All retailers and distributors look for different components when making a deal with a wine company.
Mid-range South African grocery chain

Low priced brands are easy to get listed and require little extra marketing

High-end and mid-range wines require a strategic marketing plan

Brand Building
- On-consumption
- Social Media
“They must add something of value that the rest of the supplier base hasn’t got. Why list a new supplier when I can just go to the existing suppliers and grow them?”

“You need to be willing to be flexible, blend, change.”

Woolworths requirements

- International Production of Wine (IPW) Registration
- Farming for the Future Certification
- Biodiversity Wine Initiative
Smaller Wine Shops

- **Mission and friendliness of the winery**
  - Love Wine, Stellenbosch

- **Taste and retail performance**
  - Cellar in the City, Cape Town

- **Quality and consumer preferences**
  - Wijnhuis, Stellenbosch

- **Taste and reviews**
  - Wine Vine, Worcester, US

- **Taste and mission**
  - Caroline’s Fine Wines, Cape Town
Key Finding

Above all, taste and quality are the most important aspects of a wine according to consumers, retailers, and industry professionals.
What matters most to US wine consumers?
SA Industry Professionals and Retailers

“If a winery is not able to source good quality wine, it will not stand in the international market; it will not be competitive and people will not buy it.”

—Charles Erasmus, CEO of SAWIT

“You have to base your whole strategy on good quality and value.”

—Ivan Oertle, former Wine Buyer of Woolworths
How can producers convey their taste and quality to browsing consumers?
Key Findings

● Women in Wine was identified as an “artistic” mid-range wine in the US market.
● Labeling design is important to effectively convey and position a brand.
● The mission of a wine brand generally encourages consumers to purchase.
● Fairtrade certification is not a critical factor to South African retailers and consumers, however most care about ethical production.
● All retailers and distributors look for different components when making a deal with a wine company.
● Above all, taste and quality are the most important aspects of a wine according to consumers, retailers, and industry professionals.
Women in Wine could focus on...

1. Continuing to market as a concept brand
2. Rebranding as a high-end wine
3. Establishing a “home”